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Editorial And Other Comments

Symington Shows Danger Of Government Secrecy

Many members of the press have been skeptical of the President's request for censorship of the news. This results largely from the fear that censorship would only cover up information which the public should have, while failing to be effective in keeping important information from the enemy.

It hasn't taken long for an example of the validity of this fear to present itself.

Sen. Stuart Symington (D-Mo) is gaining a certain reputation in Washington because the Pentagon is suppressing information which he feels the public should have, while the Army is releasing statistics on intelligence reports dealing with Russian missiles.

Symington said the information is "the most detailed that I have even seen."

Yet at the same time, the senator continued, the Pentagon has suppressed "for public relations reasons only," certain testimony given recently before Senate committees.

Symington referred to an article in the May issue of *Military Review*, a magazine published by the Army's Command and General Staff College at Ft. Leavenworth, Kas., which reported the sites of 37 Russian missile pads and 14 missile factories. The article also gave data on Russian missile production.

But the article, he said, conflicts with

what the Central Intelligence Agency told the Senate.

In a Senate speech, Symington said, "If the information in this article is correct, then information given the Senate by the Central Intelligence Agency is incorrect. So now we keep from the American people broad important policy problems they have the right to know about; at the same time, the Department of Defense itself releases detailed information about the Russian military contrary to that presented to the Senate by CIA."

Symington suggested that Defense Secretary Robert McNamara, who recently criticized the publishing of too much defense data, "take a further look at his own shop."

This is the same suggestion we offered when President Kennedy first issued his call for self-restraint on the part of the press. Much of the information the President complained about came from his own administration sources.

Censorship has always been a dirty word in the minds of the press, and it always will be, because it would take the wisdom of Solomon to properly decide which information should be censored.

And it has been a long time since Solomon took part in handling the affairs of a government. That type of governing wisdom is just not likely to be found—in this administration or any other.